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S.O. 12358
DOD ITR 8/11/07
by KW NAWL Date 11/07

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MFR 04014598

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Event: Interview of Dr. John Hamre

Type of Event: Interview

Date: December 9, 2003

Prepared by: Bonnie D. Jenkins

Reviewed by: Mike Hurley

Classification: ~~TOP SECRET~~

Team Number: 3 (Counterterrorism Policy)

Location: 2100 K Street, NW

Participants – Non-Commission: Dr. John Hamre

Participants – Commission: Chris Kojm, Bonnie Jenkins, Mike Hurley, Gordon Lederman

Due to a sudden commitment prior to the interview, Hamre could only stay for 50 minutes.

Background

(U) John Hamre is currently President and CEO of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Hamre was the Deputy Secretary of Defense from May 1997 – April 1, 2000. Prior to that position, he was the OSD Comptroller from 1993-1997. Hamre noted early on that as Deputy Secretary, he did not play a large role in policy development. Under the structure preferred by Secretary Cohen, Hamre was the chief operating officer. Cohen set forth Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD) policy direction and Hamre ensured OSD operated under those guidelines. He would establish a process to clarify policy at the most senior policy formation level short of the Secretary. That was both Cohen's and Hamre's concept of Hamre's position. This division of labor held for counterterrorism (CT) issues as well.

(U) Hamre's office was also the focal point for most of OSD's interaction with the intelligence community. Hamre signed all Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) documents for the Department

(U) Hamre attended approximately half of the Deputies Committee (DC) meetings focused on CT and Walt Slocombe, the former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, attended the other CT DC meetings. Slocombe liked to attend these meetings. There were too many DC meetings that, as Hamre stated, "Did not do anything." When there was an important issue that had a significant impact on DoD/OSD resources and interests, Hamre would attend. For example, a DC meeting to discuss deploying a ballistic missile defense system and how that would be accomplished without violating the ABM treaty would be a meeting he would attend. However, many DC meetings were on routine issues. There were

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informal DC meetings every Tuesday that were 20% policy and 80% transactional.

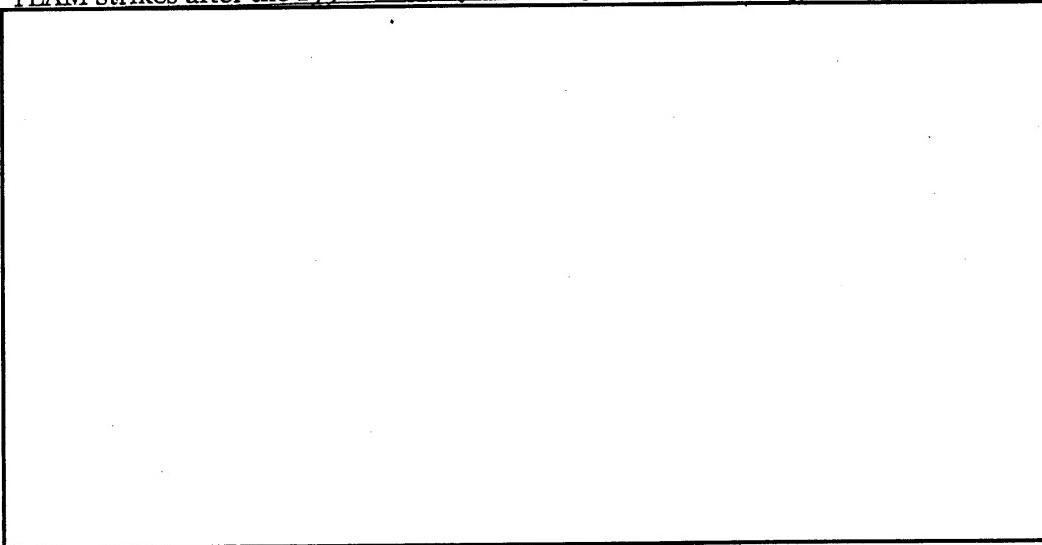
(U) Hamre never attended a CT small group meeting. He also does not recall a Deputies level small groups focused on CT issues.

CT in OSD

(U) CT within OSD has two dimensions: force protection (FP), which are defensive measures, and CT, which are offensive measures. The offensive measures are implemented through U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) while defensive measures are implemented through the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The pivotal development that led to the strong emphasis in DoD on FP issue was Khobar Towers.

Relations with ASD SO/LIC

(U) Hamre's relationship with ASD SO/LIC was similar to those of the other Assistant Secretaries of Defense (ASD) noted earlier, however; there is an additional complication with this particular ASD. ASD SO/LIC is a statutorily defined Assistant Secretary and while organizationally it reports through the Under Secretary for Policy, there were special arrangements whereby on CT issues, SO/LIC would go directly to the Secretary.

TLAM strikes after the 1998 Embassy BombingPDD-39 and PDD-62

(U) There was not much debate or discussion on which agency would take the lead in CT missions both within the U.S. and overseas. There was an agreement with the Department of Justice (DoJ) that the Attorney General (AG) would be the lead agency for US CT efforts and the military would stay out of the way and not tell DoJ how to tactically manage its CT mission. By definition, DoD is limited

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in what it can do within the U.S. because of constitutional Posse Comitatus issues.

The mission was to be controlled under exceptional security procedures and there were only four people in the Department who were aware of this activity. None of the individuals that were moved to the DC area knew why they were being moved. Hamre was directly involved on this matter because of the classification level.

Intelligence

(U) Hamre received the same Presidential Daily Briefing that CIA gave to all Principals and Deputies. The CIA briefer would meet Hamre at his house and ride to work with him. The briefer would brief Hamre's military assistant, as well as his junior military assistant. Two days a week the JCS/J2 (Intelligence) would brief Hamre and that was normally a half-hour to 45 minute briefing. Hamre also had a morning report from NSA.

His focus on the intelligence he received was of a managerial and administrative nature rather than on operational matters.

Homeland Defense

(U) There were discussions in OSD and JCS in 1999 regarding the establishment of "a CINC USA" and to create a focal point for domestic response. What resulted was the establishment of the Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, VA, which was not the full blown NORTHCOM type structure that developed post 9-11. The command focused on strategic planning for consequence management. It was commanded by Bruce Lawler.

(U) Hamre was engaged in preparatory homeland security issues such as: helping to design and pick the Rapid Response Teams, Nunn-Lugar-Dominici Act activities, briefings on consequence management, developing a two-star position at readiness command, etc. He does not recall any discussion regarding a role for NORAD. The only discussion he does recall about NORAD focused on the role of Canadian participation in ballistic missile defense.

(U) On another matter, the FBI wanted its own airplane to move teams on short notice. Hamre believed that the AG and FBI should have had their own planes and he strongly agreed with their goal. One year Senator Stevens added money for an airplane saying it would be held by the DoD but should be used and made accessible to the DoJ. This began a year-long debate over what and how this was to be accomplished. OSD wanted the plane located at Andrews AFB but the FBI

¹ Hamre believes that has not been done, however and does not know if the nuclear response element remains in the Washington area.

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wanted it in Manassas, VA, which is closer to the Quantico Marine Base and where their center of gravity is located. The problem was Senator Stevens told Mr. Freeh he would help Freeh but told Hamre he would *not* give Mr. Freeh an airplane.

(U) Hamre helped the FBI and DoJ obtain additional funds through DoD's accounts for response capabilities. In the case of a federal emergency, automatic funding is possible through the Stafford Act, which provides funds to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Or, if there is a determination of a national event, there is a special designated category whereby the President can automatically trigger funding. Other than that, there is no standing instrument that would automatically allow another agency to spend money from DoD's accounts. In principle one agency should not be given a blank check on another department's account.

A-Q and UBL

(U) The name "Usama bin Laden" became familiar to Hamre in the 1994-1995 time frames when he was the OSD Comptroller. In that position, while Hamre did not receive intelligence briefings, there was a general awareness of UBL as a personality and as someone who caused trouble to the United States.

(U) Hamre has no recollection of concerns that UBL was attempting to acquire chemical and biological weapons or any briefings that UBL was trying to obtain organic capabilities; however, he does recall the USG concern that A-Q was attempting to acquire weapons of mass destruction through agents. His knowledge of this was acquired after the 1998 Embassy bombing.

CSG

(U) DoD was worried about Dick Clarke. Very early on in Hamre's tenure, Clarke called the JCS and said the President had ordered the movement of troops when in fact there was no such order. On a second occasion, Clarke issued in writing a memorandum that directed the movement of CT forces to Doha when that had not been decided upon by the Principals. Therefore, on these two occasions Clarke attempted to direct troop movement under the possibly implied authority of the President when it had not been directed. Clarke may have sensed that was what was decided but that is not the same as the President committing the movement of forces overseas. So, there was a reticence on OSD and DoD to take Clarke at face value when he gave directions. On the other hand, Hamre knows of no order from the NSC that OSD or DoD did not execute.

Military Operations Pre 9-11 against UBL and A-Q

(U) If the President wanted the military to put boots on the ground, DoD would have done that. There may have been times when Clarke wanted DoD to put boots on the ground when it was not clear that is what the President directed. The issue is a lot more complicated than what Clarke has made it out to be.

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(U) There were no discussions about military operations against UBL or A-Q, excluding the cruise missile attacks in Afghanistan. Intelligence operations were underway that were directly targeted against UBL. However, Hamre does not recall that the assets involved were DoD human assets or intelligence community assets, though he assumes they were intelligence community assets. He recalls how difficult it was to get UBL but this was through intelligence and not military channels.

Clinton and Lewinsky

(U) The Clinton and Lewinsky incident had no impact on operational planning. The bigger reaction in his view was during Operation Desert Fox when several members in Congress argued that the operation was being conducted because of the Monica Lewinsky problem. He was offended people would think that was the case. However, there were no discussion about Lewinsky at the time of the TLAM strikes and no one in the Department discussed the issue. While some in the Department may have been deeply offended by the situation, it was just kept away from professional discussions that took place on any subject.

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